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ANALYSIS OF RELATIONS BETWEEN USA AND UKRAINE: WHAT ARE THE USA STRATEGIC GOALS IN THE UKRAINIAN CRISIS?

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Abstract

After the United States achieved its goal of denuclearizing in the post-Soviet space, the essence of their policy toward Ukraine is to support Ukraine's independence and deter Russia's rise. There are three vectors of US policy towards Ukraine: 1) Protection of the sovereignty and integrity of Ukraine. 2) Assistance to Ukraine in joining NATO. 3) Helping Ukraine get rid of Russia's economic and energy dependence. The actions of the United States after the Ukrainian crisis are a clear manifestation of this given direction. The US policy towards Ukraine is based on a fundamental opposition to Russia's policy. The confrontation between the United States and Russia in Ukraine is more a confrontation of strategic will than a confrontation of strategic interests. In the future, the United States and Russia may somehow resolve the Ukrainian crisis and break out of their confrontation. The new US political practice after the civil war in Ukraine also confirms this to a certain extent.

The issue investigated in the article is to identify the main causes and characteristics of certain aspects of relations between the United States and Ukraine, which caused the Ukrainian crisis and, as a result, led to a split in society and anti-Russian sentiments. The article summarizes some historical experience of Ukrainian nationalism and American imperialism, leading to the Ukrainian crisis.

The relevance of the article is that topic has not been sufficiently analyzed in political science. The availability of materials and sources about Ukrainian crisis requires the generalization, systematization and scientific understanding of the fact of the USA strategy in the fight against Russia. The study of this topic allows to summarize the results of political processes in Ukraine.

Keywords: USA, Russia, Ukrainian crisis, the USA - Ukraine relations

1. Introduction

The United States and Ukraine did not establish diplomatic relations for a long time, because the countries are geographically far apart, lack of historical and cultural points of contact and deep interdependence in the economy. After the beginning of the Ukrainian crisis, the United States showed unprecedented attention to Ukraine: political, economic and military support was unprecedented, and this support became one of the important triggers for exacerbating the crisis. Whatever the US goal in the Ukrainian crisis, this goal causes widespread public concern. Russian analysts and the political community summarize that the US goal is to “draw Russia into a war with Ukraine”.^[1] In fact, we can see that the United States is detrimental to Ukraine, and not contributing to development. Some analysts in Ukraine summarize that “the United States facilitated Ukraine's accession to the EU”.^[1] I believe, that the goal is to turn Ukraine into a barrier between Europe and Russia and reduce the chances of establishing a strategic alliance between the EU and Russia.

What is the US goal in the Ukrainian crisis? This goal involves making the highest decisions in US diplomatic circles, and the crisis is not over yet, and the situation is still evolving. It is still difficult to give a clear and affirmative answer regarding the US goal in Ukraine.

Analyzing the relations between the USA and Ukraine, the author tries to reveal the nature of the US policy towards Ukraine. I hope to give a scientific and rational point of view on the answer to this question.

2. Research question and methodology

The study of selected research summarizing the results of political processes in Ukraine, and allows to reveal the goals of the United States in relation to post-Soviet Ukraine.

The main sources are books and articles in periodicals, Internet resources.

The methodological basis of the study are the basic principles: the priority of common human values, the consideration of political and geopolitical realities, historicism, objectivity and science. To solve the scientific problem, the following methodological methods were used: logical method; induction and deduction method; analysis and synthesis; system method; comparative historical method and some others methods. The use of these methods allowed me to show the problem under investigation as a system, allowed to highlight the contradictions, it allowed to identify the contradictions that were the basis of the Ukrainian political crisis. In the end, the use of these methods allowed me to determine interests of the United States and identify the main characteristics and trends.

The theoretical material of international relations is covered in detail by the following authors: N.P. Tereshchenko ^[2]; Yu. P. Malov ^[3]; M. G. Delyagin ^[4]; S.I. Aksenenko ^[5]; N.Y. Azarov ^[6]; S.P. Buntovsky ^[7]; P. G. Gubarev ^[8]; A. D. Smirnov ^[9]; S.V. Chernyavsky ^[10]; D.E. Muse ^[11]; A.N. Matantsev ^[12]; A. O. Mitrofanov ^[13]; L. Dehiyo ^[14]; E.N. Pashentsev ^[15]. Information of the geopolitical approach can be studied through the scientific work of A.G. Gasparyan ^[16]. A.G. Gasparyan was one of the first to note that Ukraine had been under the influence of various political forces (Western and Eastern politics) for a long time and attributed it to the type of split countries.

The current situation in Ukraine was reviewed using current publications on the problems of the domestic political crisis in Ukraine and relations with Russia. In the process of considering the development of the domestic political situation in Ukraine, international agreements were used as a theoretical basis.

3. The development of USA and Ukraine relations

3.1 Initial stage of establishing diplomatic relations

On January 3, 1992, the United States and Ukraine formally established diplomatic relations. At the beginning of independence, Ukraine carried out comprehensive political, economic and military reforms in full accordance with the Western model, and also carried out “one-sided” pro-American diplomacy in foreign policy. In May 1992, after the meeting of the presidents of the two countries, an «Agreement on relations between the USA and Ukraine and the establishment of a democratic partnership» was signed. This agreement established the basic norms for the development of bilateral relations. But the so-called “democratic partnership” is just a cover and has no significant and practical aspects. The goal of the US policy towards Ukraine at that time was to quickly destroy more than 2,150 tactical nuclear weapons and more than 185 strategic nuclear weapons left over from the Soviet Union. In accordance with the «Lisbon Protocol», Ukraine was the legal successor to the «Strategic Arms Reduction Agreement», signed by the Soviet Union on July 31, 1991. Ukraine has committed itself to adhere to its policy of becoming a non-nuclear state and is ready to join the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

On January 14, 1994, US President B. Clinton, Russian President B. Yeltsin, and Ukrainian President L. Kravchuk signed a trilateral agreement on the destruction of nuclear weapons on the

territory of Ukraine, according to which Ukraine will send all nuclear weapons to Russia for destruction. On February 4, 1994, the Ukrainian parliament approved the first stage of a treaty on reducing strategic offensive potentials, and on November 18, Ukraine ratified the agreement of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. From this point on, relations between the United States and Ukraine entered a new era. The political strategy of the United States towards Ukraine and Russia also entered the new era.

3.2 Stable period of relations development

After L. Kuchma became president in March 1994, he made significant adjustments to Ukraine's foreign policy. Kuchma rejected the "one-sided" approach to the United States and marked the beginning of a "balance" strategy that has the same approach to the United States, Europe and Russia. The United States at that time emphasized that "the existence, security and prosperity of a free, independent and sovereign Ukraine is of great importance for the United States".^[17] This is a turning point in US policy toward Ukraine, which shows that the United States no longer looks at Ukraine only from the point of view of Russian politics, but instead develops its own interests in Ukraine. In 1996, Ukraine officially announced that all nuclear weapons on its territory had been sent to Russia, and the problem of the destruction of nuclear weapons in Ukraine was completely resolved. The relations of the USA and Ukraine have entered a new stage of comprehensive economic, political and military cooperation. In 1997, both sides began to develop a strategic partnership. In 1999, the US government supported the Ukrainian opposition, criticizing the Ukrainian government for suppressing the will of the people, thereby offending the Ukrainian government. In 1999, NATO launched an air strike against Yugoslavia. Ukraine has publicly expressed its disagreement. After Kuchma was re-elected in 2000, Ukraine adopted a new "comprehensive" diplomatic policy, in parallel, developing relations with major world powers, such as the United States, Russia, the European Union and China, and actively supporting the world multi-polar system. In the same year, the Bush administration adopted a stricter policy toward Ukraine. The White House criticized Ukraine for serious corruption, the lack of progress in implementing reforms and announced a reduction in economic assistance to Ukraine. The US also imposed economic sanctions on the Ukrainian government for non-compliance with the will of the people. In 2001, under pressure from Kuchma, pro-American Prime Minister V. Yushchenko was forced to resign, and in Ukraine there was a serious political crisis. Due to political instability in Ukraine, the Ukrainian Communist Party came to power and the United States decided to support Kuchma. Relations between the two countries are back on the right track. At the celebration of the 10th anniversary of Ukraine's independence in 2001, US National Security Adviser S. Rice personally led the delegation in Kiev to participate in the celebration. The United States also recognizes Ukraine as a European country, strengthens Ukraine's position in its foreign policy planning and is beginning to develop relations with Ukraine from a global and strategic point of view.

3.3 Stagnation in relationships

After the success of the "Velvet Revolution" in Georgia in 2003, the United States viewed Ukraine as the main springboard of political penetration into the CIS countries and sought to use the opportunity of the presidential elections in Ukraine in October 2004 to completely turn Ukraine into a "country of democracy and freedom". After the announcement of the first round of elections, Kuchma supported V. Yanukovych's victory, but the United States refused to recognize the election results and recalled the ambassador in protest. With US support, opposition parties led by Yushchenko and Y. Tymoshenko began large-scale street protests, the Ukrainian authorities had to hold a second round of elections, and Yushchenko finally won the election. In April 2005, Yushchenko promised J. Bush that he would lead Ukraine to integrate into Western society and completely fall out of Russia's sphere of influence. The parties also unanimously agreed to strengthen cooperation between the two countries in the field of combating terrorism, fighting corruption and organized crime. Strategic partnership is a sign that relations between the two

countries have reached a new level. However, soon after the signing of the strategic partnership agreement, the governments of both countries changed their attitudes towards each other and bilateral relations were again put to the test. After B. Obama was elected president, he put forward the diplomatic line of “smart power”. Unlike Bush’s “one-sided” policy, Obama stressed that “the United States will not openly interfere in the internal affairs of Ukraine, but will use more financial, humanitarian and other means as an instrument of influence on the internal affairs and diplomacy of Ukraine”.^[18] The main vector of US policy: firstly, the promotion of pro-American forces in Ukraine to increase influence in the Ukrainian political arena, as well as the expansion of the political base in the East and Southeast. Secondly, to increase the attention and support of Ukrainian youth organizations. Third, the preparation of Ukraine to join NATO. Fourthly, strengthening relations with the main Ukrainian political parties. Fifth, increased attention to the Crimean region. This is not only the base of the Russian Black Sea Fleet, but also an important area for the exploration and development of oil on the Black Sea in the future. In 2011, the EU fell into a sovereign debt crisis, the “Arab Spring” caused a larger revolution in the Middle East and North Africa, and Ukraine’s importance in the overall US diplomatic line declined. Yanukovych’s expansion of his power, control over the appointment of central and local officials, suppression of the media, suppression of the opposition, especially the criminal prosecution of his political opponent Tymoshenko, again raised US concerns about the development of democracy. The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank also disagreed with Yanukovych’s economic reforms. This situation in bilateral relations persisted until the beginning of the Ukrainian crisis in 2014.

4. The essence of the US policy towards Ukraine

Eurasia - the most important geopolitical goal of the United States. The central position of Eastern Europe, in which Ukraine is located, is an important link in achieving this goal. Ukraine is an important “trump card” for the United States in deterring Russia's revival and the struggle for hegemony.

In 1995, in a report of US national interests, in collaboration with Harvard University, countries were listed for the first time that have vital interests for the United States. This country is Ukraine. It is necessary to turn Ukraine against Russia and allow it to join Europe. The key to hegemony is “democratic partnership”. The main character of relations between Ukraine and the United States is determined. The agreement on nuclear weapons is being destroyed, which removes the biggest obstacle to the development of US-Ukrainian cooperation. For further development, there must be a new impulse. Support for the independence of Ukraine, opposition to Russia's influence, naturally, will become the main goal of the US policy towards Ukraine.

To achieve this goal, there were chosen three areas:

1) *Resolutely defend the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and support Ukraine as a regional power.*

Ukraine is not only the only power in the CIS that can compete with Russia, but also plays an indispensable role in maintaining stability and balance in the CIS and Eastern Europe. The US needs to achieve advantages in the Black Sea region and strengthen its influence in the CIS. The rapid development of Ukraine will have a serious impact on the security and stability of Europe. Therefore, since 1993, the United States has been pursuing a policy of supporting Ukraine as a regional power. In 1995, Clinton made a clear statement at Kiev University that “the United States views Ukraine as a key factor in European security and stability and emphasizes the importance of an economically prosperous, democratic and stable Ukraine in Europe and the international community”.^[19]

2) *Promoting the integration of Ukraine in the "Western world".*

The unique geographical position of Ukraine and its regional influence made it an important part of the changing geopolitical security structures of the former Soviet Union. Whether Ukraine will be integrated into the “Western world” or will remain with Russia, this will have a serious

impact and change the entire geopolitical structure of the Eurasian region. In particular, Ukraine was once an important part of the former Soviet military and economic system: after the unification of Russia and Ukraine, they would restore strong geopolitical power in Eurasia. Therefore, at the beginning of Ukraine's independence, the US Congress adopted a resolution directly calling for a boycott of all regional organizations and integration mechanisms that would help the former Soviet Union to unite. After Yushchenko's victory in the "Orange Revolution", he began a new round of the diplomatic process for joining NATO. A visit to Strasbourg, Brussels, Warsaw and Berlin began the radical process of Ukraine joining NATO. The US has also become more active in promoting Ukraine's entry into NATO, and both sides signed a memorandum on Ukraine's commitment to join NATO as soon as possible, which will allow NATO troops to conduct exercises throughout Ukraine. The United States also stated that Ukraine's entry into NATO was a priority for US policy in Eastern Europe and agreed to establish a NATO office in Ukraine. However, Russia is categorically against it: Russia in the 2008 Russian-Georgian war demonstrated its determination to use force to stop the expansion of NATO to the East. Yanukovych, under the influence of Moscow, took the initiative to exclude the agenda for Ukraine's entry into NATO. Therefore, Western concerns about the direction of Ukraine's foreign policy are quite understandable.

3) *Strengthening economic and energy cooperation with Ukraine. Helping Ukraine gradually get rid of its dependence on Russia.*

At the beginning of independence, the Ukrainian economy faced a collapse, and efforts to obtain US economic assistance became the main content of Ukrainian diplomacy. However, the relationship did not develop smoothly. The US may consider providing more economic assistance only if Ukraine accelerates reforms, copes with inflation and budget deficits, and quickly privatizes and transitions to a market economy. Ukraine also believes that it can complete the reforms only with the help of an infusion of Western funds.

In December 2010, Obama announced that "Ukraine will be included in the list of priority states in the field of global nuclear security".^[20] At the summit on the strategic partnership of the United States and Ukraine, held in February 2011 in Washington, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine K. Grishchenko and US Secretary of State H. Clinton reached a consensus on cooperation in the field of energy. The energy sector will become the most important issue in the bilateral strategic dialogue. The United States will fully support the development of Ukraine's energy and shale gas production. That contradicts the interests of Russia.

5. Three vectors of US policy in the Ukrainian crisis

After many years of hard work, the United States achieved its initial political goal against Ukraine, preventing Ukraine's proximity to Russia and securing its influence in this important strategic region. After the Ukrainian crisis, Russia not only violated all agreements reached after the end of the "Cold War", but also clearly intended to fully include Ukraine in its sphere of influence. This is not only a change in the regional model after the end of the "Cold War", but also a complete undermining of the US policy towards Ukraine. Therefore, the United States has shown the unprecedented importance of Ukraine in political, economic and military support for Ukraine.

In light of the various measures taken by the United States after the Ukrainian crisis, it can be tentatively determined that the goals of the United States in the Ukrainian crisis are mainly the following:

First, it is the support of a democratic government recognized by the West. After the departure of V. Yanukovych, the United States quickly recognized the new regime. After US Vice President J. Biden visited Kiev on April 23, 2014, he announced a large-scale program to help Ukraine, including giving Ukrainians \$ 50 million for political and economic reforms. On May 29, P. Poroshenko was elected president, and Obama was the first to congratulate him. The US State Department announced the introduction of a new visa system for citizens of Ukraine.

Secondly, support the independence and sovereignty of Ukraine. The United States clearly opposed the dependence of the Crimea and eastern Ukraine on Russia. After Kiev began military

operations in the east of the country, the United States provided Ukraine with military assistance, including explosive devices, portable radios, engineering equipment, communications equipment, and transportation. On June 2, 2014, Derek Shole, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security, said that “the US budget to help Ukraine will increase to \$ 18 million”.^[21]

Third, support Ukraine in joining the EU and strengthen cooperation with NATO. After Yanukovych refused to sign an association agreement with the EU, the US State Department immediately expressed disappointment. After the beginning of the Ukrainian crisis, US officials have repeatedly expressed their support for Ukraine in joining the EU. At the NATO summit in Wales on September 4, 2014, Obama and other NATO leaders met with Poroshenko and announced that they would work to support Ukraine in responding to the crisis as part of a special partnership between NATO and Ukraine, and promised to provide 15 million euros. From 13 to 26 September, NATO conducted joint military exercises in Lviv city.

6. Euromaidan and events in the East of Ukraine

6.1 Euromaidan political process

Ten years ago, the attention of the whole world was riveted on Ukraine - there were massive political protests, which later called the “Orange Revolution”. The internal political crisis caused by the opposition of various interest groups within the Ukrainian ruling elites turned for some into a “civilizational choice”, for others - a geopolitical clash of external forces. Then it seemed that the choice was made, and the bout brought victory to one of the sides. The victorious team of Viktor Yushchenko promised to immediately put the country on the European “rails” and carry out a deep modernization of a deeply corrupt and backward state with a weak economy. It quickly became clear that Yushchenko did not quite succeed in fulfilling his plans. Rapid Europeanization did not work out, the winners failed miserably in the role of modern state managers, disappointing not only the population of Ukraine, but also their patrons in Europe and the United States, who actively promoted them during the “Orange Revolution”. In 2010, as a result of the presidential election, Viktor Yanukovych, who was once overthrown during the “Color Revolution”, comes to power, but he also fails to make significant progress in modernizing the economy and politics of Ukraine.

The current events in Ukraine show that the contradictions that led to the crisis in the first half of 2000 have not been resolved in the past period, they reappeared at the next round of political and economic development. In modern Ukraine, there is a rather deep economic and political crisis. This led to the next “Maidan”. From my point of view, it is of particular relevance to identify the true causes of the current destructive processes in the Ukrainian state and to predict the consequences of these events on the development of the situation both within Ukraine and in the post-Soviet space.

Begun as a protest of a disillusioned population, protests on Independence Square turned into the largest street performances since the "Orange Revolution". The protesters perceive their action as the most important expression of national identity and a symbol of a single “Euro-breakthrough” of all Ukraine.

Not only Kyiv residents took to the streets of Kiev, but also representatives of many cities of Ukraine. On the buildings one could see ads from residents with a proposal to shelter non-resident fighters for European integration. The protesters did not just sit on the “Maidan” and demanded the resignation of Viktor Yanukovych - they blocked the presidential administration and seized the city administration of Kiev. A flag of the European Union fluttered above the building.

The breakdown of the signing of the association agreement between Ukraine and the EU, from my point of view, only served as a pretext for mass unrest, the reasons are much deeper. The views of domestic and Western experts on the sources, causes and ways of resolving the current Ukrainian crisis are polar divergent, and it is fair to say that in these assessments for the first time after the end of the “Cold War”, aggression towards each other is traced. For the West, Russia is the third party in the civil war in Ukraine, and the Russian leadership categorically rejects such a

position of the US and the EU. Another topic, tracing both domestic and foreign publications, concerns external interference in the affairs of Ukraine. The West blames Russia for this, and Russia rightly speaks of the interference of the US and the EU in the affairs of a sovereign Ukrainian state. Of course, exogenous factors had a strong influence on the devastating Ukrainian crisis, but it is also necessary to take into account the influence of factors of an endogenous order, without which it would be almost impossible for outside forces to shake the situation in the country.

One of the main reasons for the Ukrainian crisis, which is given insufficient, in my opinion, attention, is the deep economic crisis in the country. The modernization of the economy promised by the authorities failed. The Ukrainian economy is undergoing a massive crisis. The growth of wages and incomes of the population has stopped. To stimulate demand, both consumer and investment, the government has no money.

The next most important reason that led to a systemic crisis, and later to a civil war, is a rather serious political polarization of the Ukrainian population. According to a survey conducted in Ukraine, almost half of the residents support the country's accession to the European Union. Such a strong stratification largely determined the current socio-political situation in the country and made it impossible to resolve the issue by means of the political technologies of the "color revolutions", ultimately resulting in a civil war, as was the case in the countries where the "Arab Spring" took place.

Among the internal causes of the coup in Ukraine, it is also worth highlighting the ideology of Nazism. The neo-Nazi organizations became the driving force behind the coup.

I would like to note the following important factor of a purely internal order, which undoubtedly influenced the escalation of chaos in the Ukrainian state. These are oligarchs who used chaos in their favor and fought, including among themselves, for the redistribution of spheres of influence. Oligarch Petro Poroshenko became president of Ukraine. The largest business groups of Ukraine are key players not only in the economy, but also in politics, including foreign ones.

Thus, I believe that the aggravation of the situation in Ukraine was influenced not only by internal, but also by external forces. The "Maidan" was visited by many foreign high-ranking officials - US Deputy Secretary of State Victoria Nuland, Senator John McCain, US Ambassador Jeffrey Payet, the head of Lithuania, EU Presidency Dalia Grybauskaite, Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt and others. All of them called on the Ukrainian population to fight for their rights and in fact provoked a coup in the country. However, it is worth noting that the visits of Western guests to "Maidan" are only a small part of the methods and technologies that were used by the USA and the EU for the revolution in Ukraine and the realization of their geopolitical ambitions. The main striking force was the technology of "Color Revolutions", "soft power", "controlled chaos". Only this, according to representatives of the United States and Europe, is capable of leveling the defeat of the European Union in Vilnius and wresting the country from the Russian sphere of influence.

An important feature of the Ukrainian crisis is the aggressive behavior of the West, which used all the methods of the "Cold War" to influence the Ukrainian situation. Among them, the method of militant propaganda, one of the effective instruments of orientation and control of the masses during the confrontation of sociopolitical systems, as well as the wide application of the policy of double standards, is very important.

How to build further relations with the EU, on the one hand, and with the Customs Union, on the other, of course, Ukraine itself to decide.

First of all, confrontation in the modern world is fraught with very serious consequences for all members of the world community. Further isolation of the EU and the Customs Union from each other will entail a number of negative points. The main ones include economic losses; greater escalation of confrontational tendencies in relations between the EU and Russia; intensification of contradictions in the post-Soviet space (Ukraine is a vivid example here); weakening of interdependence and mutual influence on the continent. In the end, this will adversely affect stability and security issues.

It must be said, both in Russian and in Ukrainian society, today aversion to each other is cultivated. In Russia, the tendency of non-acceptance of the West, the mood of pseudo-

consolidation against the enemy, became noticeable in society. This is a very dangerous trend, because in the US and the EU a negative image of Russia, an image of an enemy, is also being created. One of the goals of the US political vector has already been achieved.

6.2 Events in the East of Ukraine

All subsequent events on the “Maidan” were only a pretext for the emergence of a confrontation in the South-East of Ukraine. The real reason for this bloody confrontation is the conflict, constantly fanned by the political elite, between the views of a significant number of the population of the West and South-East of Ukraine on the present and future of the Ukrainian state and its foreign policy. Since the declaration of independence, the West of Ukraine has assumed the right to speak on behalf of the whole of Ukraine and in February 2014, it seemed to have won. As a result of the coup, the pro-Western Government came to power. But the Southeast did not believe his program. He considered this as another castling of oligarchic and political clans. On this wave the Crimea Peninsula left Ukraine, a civil war in the South-East has begun. The conflict went beyond the framework of political discussions in legal political bodies and turned into an armed confrontation of forces that differently understand the state structure of Ukraine, its allies and friends in the future. “Maidan” has awakened not only civil society in the West of Ukraine, but also in the South-East.

In geopolitical terms, the civil war in Ukraine can and should be viewed as a confrontation between the United States and Russia. One thing is clear that the unipolar world has come to an end and forcing Russia to act against their own interests, no one will succeed. Of course, this cannot but affect the social programs of the Russian government, but all global players, and especially its neighbors, should take into account its new international practice. And of course, the political forces of Ukraine especially need to weigh their foreign policy actions, because Ukraine and Russia are neighbors.

7. Results

The results from the analysis are drawing the main prospects for the development of the People's Republics of Donbass as independent subjects of international politics.

The most acute reaction of the population to the events of “Euromaidan” was observed in the Republic of Crimea. The events that took place in Kiev prompted the peninsula authorities to hold a referendum on joining the Russian Federation. On the territory of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, protests against the new Ukrainian leadership were also held, the population refused to recognize its legitimacy. As part of a speech against the replacement of the acting governors, a process was launched to form a parallel system of government bodies, the result of which was the creation of the Donetsk and Luhansk people's republics. Since then, both people's republics have developed as independent political subjects, as evidenced by the creation of their own, state institutions that are not controlled by Kiev.

In April 2014, hostilities began in the South-East of Ukraine. On the one hand, the armed forces of Ukraine together, and on the other hand the formation of the republics. In order to end the bloodshed, on September 5, 2014, the «Minsk Protocol» was signed in Minsk, aimed at the peaceful settlement of the conflict. On February 12, 2015, it was supplemented with new agreements developed during negotiations between President of Russia, President of France, head of the German government and Ukrainian president. In accordance with the «Minsk agreements», was proposed to secure a special status for the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.^[22] Thus, the agreements did not envisage the transformation of the republics into subjects of international relations, but viewed them as subjects of the internal Ukrainian negotiation process. This document received the support of the UN Security Council and became the basis for all further peace talks on Donbass.

It was planned to complete the settlement of the conflict by the end of 2015. However, since the signing until now, none of the 13 points of the agreements has been fully implemented. It seems that the refusal of the leadership of Ukraine to start a dialogue with the proclaimed republics of Donbass, can lead to a prolonged freezing of the conflict. Under these conditions, it is becoming more and more likely that the Donetsk and Luhansk republics will try to act as independent subjects of international politics.

I will try to consider possible scenarios of developments in this direction.

1) One of the possible ways for the development of the Donbass republics as subjects of international politics is the scenario of transformation into de facto independent, but partially recognized states. The most important condition for its implementation is that the troops of the people's republics maintain control over their territories for at least the next five years. In this case, there will be a chance that in the next 10-15 years the independence of the people's republics of Donbass will be recognized by any UN member states, as well as by various partially recognized states. At the moment, the independence of Donbass was recognized only by one partially recognized state - South Ossetia.^[23] Currently, the international positions of the authorities in Donetsk and Luhansk can be destabilized by the political situation in Ukraine, which can be affected by such factors as the further development of a full-scale economic crisis, as well as an increase in protest moods in other regions, in particular, in the west of the country that the turn can, on the other hand, plunge Ukraine into the abyss of political chaos, which will result in a complete loss by Kiev of control over the territory of Donbass.

2) The implementation of the "Crimean" scenario^[24] in Donetsk and Luhansk can occur in the event of a further destabilization of the political situation in Ukraine. Currently, the likelihood of the implementation of the "Crimean" scenario in the Donbass is extremely low. There are several reasons for this. First of all, it is necessary to identify the main differences between the two political situations. The most important factor is the absence of Russian military units on the territory of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. In the case of Crimea, the presence of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation on the peninsula played a decisive role. In the absence of the Black Sea Fleet on the territory of the Crimea, the process of joining Russia could not be successfully completed, and a political conflict could even go into the stage of military confrontation.^[11] Another difference of political situations is that the realization of the scenario favorable for the population of Crimea became possible due to the influence of the Russian factor, which traditionally plays an important role in the ethnic structure of the population of the Crimean Peninsula. In accordance with the indicators of the census conducted in 2014, the number of the Russian ethnic group on the territory of the Crimean Peninsula is 67.9%.^[25] In the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, according to the latest Ukrainian population census, 38.2 and 39%^[26], respectively. It was the Russian ethnic majority that became the decisive factor, whose active position allowed us to make the promptest decisions required for secession from Ukraine and joining the Russian Federation. Similar key political decisions were also taken due to the presence of their autonomous governing bodies in the Crimea - the Supreme Council and the Council of Ministers, which allowed, unlike Donbass, to legitimately hold a referendum. In the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, the situation looked somewhat different, since such autonomous governing bodies were not there. In addition, despite the configuration of political forces at the level of regional legislative power that was similar to the Crimea, the necessary decisions in the Donbass did not take place promptly. As noted, the main reason was that, in contrast to the Crimea, the Donetsk and Luhansk regions were not ready at the institutional level to quickly make the necessary political decisions for themselves.

Also, the regional authorities of these areas did not show the required political will, as a result of which it took some time to "reformat" the political elite. The processes of "reformatting" the regional political elite in Donetsk and Luhansk actually ended on April 2014 (the Donetsk People's Republic was proclaimed on April 7; the Luhansk People's Republic was proclaimed on April 27). It should be noted that despite the high popularity among the population of Donetsk and Luhansk of the idea of joining Russia, there has recently been a certain tendency to decrease the confidence of

the people of the people's republics in the policies pursued by the Russian Federation in their attitude: in December 2017 the level of distrust of the residents of Donetsk Republic to the policy of the Russian Federation amounted to 41.3%, while in December 2018-14.3% ^[27].

3) “Bosnian” scenario. ^[28] The main essence is to overcome the conflict in the south-east of Ukraine along the path along which the political crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina was resolved. This can be implemented in the event that there is a re-escalation of the armed conflict in the Donbass and the adoption of a new agreement on its settlement is required. The author of the idea of implementing the “Bosnian” scenario in Ukraine is the British diplomat Crawford, he outlined the idea of preserving a formally united Ukraine with the creation on its territory of a virtually independent state entity within the borders of Donetsk and Luhansk republics. ^[29] According to Crawford, the meaning of the agreement, which may be beneficial to Russia, is to implement this scenario. If we talk about the mechanisms for implementing the “Bosnian” scenario in practice, then at the initial stage of its implementation, the adoption of a peace agreement in Ukraine (analogous to the «Dayton agreements» signed in 1995) is required. The states guarantors in the course of the negotiation process could be Russia, Germany and France. An integral condition for its implementation is the reform of the federalization of Ukraine. To do this, the agreement should fix a rule on changing the administrative and territorial structure of the country (transition from the unitary to the federal system) by creating on its territory three autonomous entities: The Federal Republic of Ukraine, Donetsk People’s Republic and Luhansk People’s Republic. All regions that are currently part of Ukraine should be included in the Federal Republic of Ukraine, with the exception of part of the territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Also in the country should conduct a new reform aimed at expanding autonomy at the regional and municipal levels.

So, it’s noted that in the event of non-compliance with the «Minsk Agreements» and the freezing of the conflict in the South-East of Ukraine, it may be possible to implement several development scenarios of the Donetsk and Luhansk People’s Republics as independent subjects of international politics. But in the near future, the probability of practical implementation of any of the considered scenarios is quite small. If we talk about a long-term forecast (10-15 years), the first scenario is most likely, since the “Crimean” scenario can be realized only in the event of a dramatic aggravation of the political crisis in Ukraine, and also subject to a change in Russia's position regarding the recognition of the independence of Donetsk and Luhansk republics that is currently impracticable. The “Bosnian” scenario is more likely than the “Crimean” scenario, since its implementation is possible only if a full-scale armed conflict resumes in the south-east of Ukraine and it becomes necessary to prepare a new agreement to resolve the conflict.

8. Conclusion

From 1992 to 2019, relations between the United States and Ukraine went through five presidents Bush, Clinton, George W. Bush, Obama and Trump, and from the Ukrainian side - Kravchuk, Kuchma, Yushchenko, Yanukovych, Poroshenko. The five presidents, their various foreign policy trends and political values had an important influence on the development of relations between the United States and Ukraine. In relations of both parties there is both strategic cooperation and serious contradictions. Unlike the United States and other countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, such as Kazakhstan, the relationship between the United States and Ukraine is not sustainable and gradual development, but ups and downs aimed at the pragmatic pursuit of one’s own goals. This reflects an important feature of relations between the United States and Ukraine. This is the asymmetry of bilateral relations. Ukraine regards the United States as the main partner helping to conduct European integration and join the existing European system.

The value of Ukraine in the US external strategy differs significantly. With the exception of Russia, the US strategy towards the CIS countries is within the same framework: countries have the same priority in the US strategy, and there are no qualitative differences. Nevertheless, the United

States, being the only country in the world that can have a comprehensive direct and indirect impact on Ukraine (through international organizations, European Union, other Western countries and even Russia), is at the center of external strategic priorities. Many of the national strategic goals of Ukraine are possible only if they are actively supported by the United States. Both sides are not on the same level in their diplomatic experience. As a “new” independent country, Ukraine is often too naive and full of idealism. The United States constantly develops a new understanding and position in relations with other countries in accordance with the needs of global and regional strategies. The US policy towards Ukraine reflects obvious uncertainties and gaps, which creates artificial obstacles to the development of bilateral relations. It is also an important internal cause of the crisis in relations between the United States and Ukraine. The United States has never been able to get rid of the habit of observing Ukraine through the prism of Russian policy, so the real “turn” in relations with Ukraine will occur only when relations between Russia and the United States seriously deteriorate. As soon as relations between Russia and the United States improve, this will affect relations between the United States and Ukraine.

Western sanctions and pressure from the international community forced Russia to be at a disadvantage in the Ukrainian crisis. But this is a test of strategic will, and not just a struggle of strategic interests. Russia made it clear that Ukraine is the main interest that it protects at all costs. Although the United States supports Ukraine in all directions, the latter is only its Eurasian strategy, or rather, a “pawn” in the vector of the strategy for Russia. American strategists and scientists with realistic positions believe that the US should not oppose Russia on the Ukrainian issue. What the US is worried about is the loss of strategic will, not the gain or loss of strategic gains and losses. After the crisis, the United States supported Ukraine politically. This is also confirmed by the policy of stagnating economic and military aid. In the future, there is a chance that the United States and Russia will definitely resolve the crisis and come out of confrontation. The crisis confrontation between the two countries also shows that the initiative and permanent party, as a rule, does not have a significant impact on resolving the crisis. The final outcome of a crisis often depends on how much the parties are willing to make concessions. In other words, obtaining the benefits associated with the crisis are the main factors determining the crisis. While one side is firmly convinced that it protects its core interests, regardless of the pressure exerted by the other side, it is impossible to make substantial concessions. It was tested and tested during the Berlin crisis, Cuban crisis and Russian-Georgian conflict. The United States could not correctly understand the interests of Russia in the post-Soviet space. After the onset of the Ukrainian crisis, the US reacted improperly, especially on March 18, when the Ukrainian response to the Crimean question was not strong enough. At that moment, the United States had no levers of influence on Russia. After the beginning of the civil war, the Ukrainians were trapped. Minor changes occurred in the US position. In contrast to the previous positive intervention and a tough position, a certain degree of “detachment” appeared. Shortly after the meeting of the President of Russia and Ukraine in Minsk on August 29, 2014, Obama made it clear that the United States does not intend to take military action to resolve the Ukrainian problem. During Poroshenko’s visit to the United States on September 18, the United States did not agree to form an alliance with Ukraine, but agreements were reached to provide funding in the amount of \$ 5 million. The day before, US Assistant Secretary of State Fried visited Kiev, he also suggested that sanctions against Russia could be lifted or weakened should the Crimea return to Ukraine. In its speech at the UN General Assembly, the expansion of Russia was named one of the three main threats facing the United States along with the “Islamic State” and the “Ebola” virus. This suggests that the Ukrainian crisis has lost its position in the US diplomatic agenda and strategic considerations. At least this is no longer the main goal.

In the era of globalization, intervention is no longer a moral issue. This is an economic problem that is considered in terms of economic benefits. Successful intervention should, above all, be a responsible intervention. The US intervention in many conflicts in Eurasia has led to confusion and chaos. This is obviously irresponsible and unsuccessful. This is a mistake in terms of the effectiveness of the intervention. The antiterrorist practice of the United States after the September 11 incident also proves that without substantial support from Russia, the United States will not be

able to effectively solve the problem of the “Islamic state”, which could be an opportunity for the United States to correct its previous policy in the context of the Ukrainian crisis.

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